

Application No. 09/844,344
Response to Office Action

Customer No. 01933

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

CLAIMS

Claims 1-9 have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems so as to more clearly recite the features of the present invention in better U.S. form.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 6,646,754 ("Redd et al"). This rejection, however, is respectfully traversed.

According to the present invention as recited in clarified amended independent claim 1, a photographic service system is provided which comprises at least one image input apparatus and an image server. The image input apparatus comprises: means for automatically conducting an order receiving process to receive an image input order; means for performing photographic processing to develop a silver halide photographic light-sensitive material;

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means for converting image recording information of the silver halide photographic light-sensitive material after the photographic processing into digital image data with an image sensor; and retrieval information issuing means for receiving and issuing a retrieval ID for retrieving digital image data and for outputting an index print corresponding to the received order. In addition, the image server comprises: means for communicating with the image input apparatus through a network to receive the digital image data from the at least one image input apparatus; and means for giving the retrieval ID to the digital image data transferred from the image input apparatus, for transmitting the retrieval ID to the image input apparatus, and for storing on the image server the digital image data in association with the retrieval ID.

Thus, according to the present invention as recited in claim 1, the image input apparatus automatically conducts an order receiving process to receive, for example, a disposable camera and order information. Photographic processing is performed at the image input apparatus to develop the silver halide photographic light-sensitive material of the disposable camera, and the image recording information of the silver halide photographic light-sensitive material after the photographic processing is converted into digital image data with an image sensor. The digital image data is transmitted to the image

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server, which gives the retrieval ID to the digital image data and which stores the digital image data in association with the retrieval ID. And the image input apparatus issues the retrieval ID and outputs and index print.

Thus, according to the present invention as recited in clarified amended independent claim 1, photographic processing is performed to develop the silver halide photosensitive material and conversion of the developed images to digital image data are both performed at the image input apparatus.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner contends that Redd et al discloses means for performing photographic processing of the silver halide photosensitive material at, for example, column 12, line 66 to column 13 line 8 and at column 13, lines 43-45.

It is respectfully submitted, however, that Redd et al merely explains at column 13, lines 43-45 thereof that the public terminal (i.e. point-of-sale station or kiosk) may scan prints or negatives. That is, Redd et al discloses that the public terminal may include a scanner to convert developed images into digital image data. However, at column 12, line 66 to column 13, line 8 thereof Redd et al explains that exposed film should be sent to the photo-finisher (i.e. to a central processing location) for developing and for scanning.

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Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Redd et al does not at all disclose, teach or suggest a public terminal that performs photographic processing to develop silver halide photographic light-sensitive material, as well as converting developed image information into digital image data, in the manner of the present invention as recited in clarified amended independent claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in amended claim 1, and claims 2-9 depending therefrom, clearly patentably distinguishes over Redd et al, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

* * * * *

Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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